THE NEW JERSEY EXONUMIA SOCIETY
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

JERSEYana

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MEMBERSHIP DUES: REGULAR..$6.00, ASSOCIATE..$3.00
JUNIOR(-18)..$4.00, LIFE....$60.00

FROM YOUR EDITOR

By Dennis Helmer

I really feel that this is the best time of the year to be in the great state of New Jersey, The grass will never be greener, the crops have all been planted, and best of all, the season for "yard sales" and "flea markets" begins in earnest!!! Community yard sales are becoming more popular here in South Jersey, and they offer a wonderful opportunity to pick up some desirable exonumia.

So, to each of our members, I say, "Put down your research books,(the long winter evenings and the chilly March winds are long gone), and get out and about and do some serious hunting and gathering".....and while you're at it, drop me a line about your favorite find...I could use the material, and your fellow members would enjoy sharing your experiences.

A good place to begin looking for "new" New Jersey exonumia would be in your own pocket change !!! The long awaited New Jersey quarter debuted at a first strike ceremony held at the Philadelphia mint on May 5. Governor Whitman. The New Jersey quarter is the 3rd coin issued in the United States Mint's 50 States Quarters Program...which calls for the issuance of 5 new state quarters per year reaching all the way out to the year 2008. The new quarters are being issued in the order of their statehood, with Delaware first, and Hawaii last. Our New Jersey coin is rather unique because it features George Washington on both the obverse and reverse:

Please keep sending me your articles so we can continue to share the wealth of knowledge that exists in our Society. My backlog of articles is depleting and I need some more information for our upcoming issues of *JERSEYana*.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
APRIL 1999

By Steve Middleton

There are currently 685 paid up members and 36 Life members on the NJES rolls. 14 former members are about to be dropped from the membership roster for non-payment of dues!!! (Paid up is indicated on your label with "99").

Please renew NOW for 1999 if you haven't yet. The renewals came in very quickly after our last mailing; but if you didn't get in done then, please take a moment to renew your dues, payable to NJES to;

Al Zaika
PO Box 65
Bellmawr, NJ 08099

You will be dropped from the mailing list if you do not renew. Your mailing label on THIS Jerseyana should have 99 on it or you are NOT PAID UP 11 Please let me or Al Zaika know if you think a mistake has been made. Please renew soon.

NJES MEETING AT GSNA, MAY 1st.

Our meeting consisted of a small but spirited group of officers and members. We discussed the possibility of commemorating our upcoming 20 year anniversary with some sort of token or medal...more to come on that in the next issue...and we had a fun and enlightening round of show and tell. Al Zaika dropped in to say hello....and we enlisted the services of an "unnamed photographer" who, with a borrowed camera, produced the above photo. We look forward to seeing you at the next annual NJES meeting!!!

Casino chips chronicle history and represent a whole new world to collectors: You gotta' know when to hold 'em, know when to cash 'em in.

CASHING IN

BY WILLIAM H. SOKOLIC

Thousands of revelers gathered to party at the Dupont Plaza Hotel and Casino in Puerto Rico on the eve of 1987. They dined the old year away, toasted the new year to come, and let the chips fly where they may.

It was the last day the chips would ever fly at the Dupont Plaza. An arson fire ripped through the hotel, killing almost 100 guests and employees....and making a collectors item out of the casino's chips, which survived the deadly inferno.

Which brings up George Davis.

Davis spent $300 for a $100 chip retrieved from the fire, one of a handful he's acquired from the hotel over the years. Why, he even has a $5 chip, melted at the edges. He displayed his collection at a meeting and auction of the Atlantic City chapter of the Casino Chips and Gaming Tokens Collectors Club at the Showboat on a Sunday in September.

The club brought together over 100 men and women to bid and buy, trade and sell the latest collectible: casino chips. A proliferation of gambling in the '90s has fueled a demand for new chips, old chips, and no-longer-in-use chips. The fuel has also sparked a secondary avenue for chip collectors—the limited-edition commemorative, which honors people, places, and things from Pavarotti to poker rooms to Valentine's Day.

Chips of all sorts exchanged hands at the Showboat Casino Hotel that day. Davis sold a handful, but none came from the Dupont Plaza. "I waited too long to get them," says Davis, a retired New York City cop from Yonkers. "You just have an affinity for certain chips." Those that are a witness to history, he says. Those with a story to tell, tragic though it may be.

Misfortunes make for valuable chips. So does any mishandling, mismanagement and mistake that leads to a change in ownership, a change in name, a closing of the doors. It's the old law of supply and demand—cut off the supply and the demand goes up; if the demand goes up, so does the value.

Though chip collecting has yet to take its place among stamps, coins, and the other established collectibles, its aficionados have their own palace—The Nevada Gold Museum in Laughlin—and three magazines, with a fourth on the way.

"I compare this to the infancy of baseball card collecting," says Archie Black, the Brick, New Jersey, man who serves as national president of the Casino Chips and Gaming Tokens Collectors Club. In little more than three years, the club has amassed over 3,000 members, some from as far as Europe. The Atlantic City chapter alone has 200 supporters.

Black's foray into the hobby began during the nation's Bicentennial celebration in 1976, when he collected commemorative tokens and medals issued by towns and burgs in New Jersey.

"When the casinos opened in Atlantic City, chips fit right in with what I was doing. Now I collect only chips," says the man they call Mr. Chips.

A retired technician for Ma Bell, Black also has a penchant to gamble every now and then, which further explains his interest in chip collecting. Indeed, 99 percent of collectors are gamblers who started by taking a souvenir chip home, says Tom Pleau, publisher of *Coast to Coast's Casino Collectible* magazine, in Laguna Niguel, California.

Eric Rosenbloom, for one. He returned from a trip to Antigua 14 years ago with a chip in his pocket. "I forgot to cash it in," quips Rosenbloom, a Levittown, New York lawyer and chip collector.

ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY MIURA

How fanatical is he now? Well, a chip serves as his business card. And guess what he named his son? And guess where Chip was born? Yeah, Las Vegas.

Though chip prices paid by collectors pale compared to coins—this past spring, a 1913 Liberty Head nickel sold at auction for $1.8 million—the rare ones do achieve a certain financial notoriety.

A 1978 $5 baccarat chip from Resorts International, in use for just a short period of time, fetched $3,500 at an auction. Some early Atlantic City casino chips—the Brighton (now Sands Hotel & Casino) or the Boardwalk Regency (now Caesars Atlantic City)—have pulled in four figures in the marketplace. A collector paid $1,400 for a $100 chip from the former Atlantis.

Davis pegs his own chip collection at close to $5,000, many from casinos in Puerto Rico, his specialty. Joe Fiore, a Yonkers friend of Davis', specializes in Harrah's chips from around the world, including those issued for the corporation's defunct casino in New Orleans. "If they open a new hotel there and use the same chips, the value of mine will drop," he laments. "But if they use new ones, well, that's a different story."

Not that Fiore harbors a secret wish that Harrah's sinks its New Orleans experiment. But, hey, collectors salivate at even the simplest corporate upheaval.

In Atlantic City alone, the Golden Nugget begat Bally's Grand which begat The Grand which begat the Atlantic City Hilton. And Hilton built a casino, issued chips, but couldn't get licensed in 1985. The company sold out to Trump's Castle. This year, the Castle itself changed its name to Trump Marina. The Tropicana switched its name to TropWorld and last year, returned to its original name. Each name change puts an end to a line of chips.

"Anytime a chip becomes obsolete, it becomes more valuable," Pleau says.

The Commemoratives

Tara Dawn Holland played the tables at eight casinos in mid-September. The outgoing Miss America didn't take a whirlwind gambling tour during pageant week, but her face graced commemorative chips issued by the participating gaming halls.

The Miss America chip, a marriage between gaming and the famed pageant, is one of a long line of commemoratives put out by casinos in the past five years. Most of the chips end up not in a blackjack hand or on the come-line, but under cellophane in the binders of collectors. Such collectibles are becoming all the rage, especially in light of technological advances in color and graphics. Witness Holland's photograph on the Miss A chip, the first in what's expected to be an annual September tradition.

Commemoratives have played an increasingly important role as a subset of the chip collecting hobby. Casinos from coast to coast have issued chips to honor singers and sports heroes, to mark holidays and ethnic fests, to celebrate new casinos and new additions. To wit, from Atlantic City alone:

*Tropicana has released two Mummers Day chips honoring the Philadelphia tradition. The casino will issue a third come the new year.

*Trump World's Fair put out a series of first anniversary chips in August, depicting one of the eight World's Fair murals that hang in the casino hotel.

*The Grand, now the Atlantic City Hilton, issued five chips last year to honor the first players elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

But the more popular chips celebrate performers, from Penn and Teller to Madonna, from Sammy Davis, Jr. to Hootie and the Blowfish. In Atlantic City, Resorts paid tribute to Pavarotti, Tropicana honored Johnny Mathis, and Caesars Atlantic City did likewise with Gladys Knight, George Burns, and David Copperfield.

Each new chip release creates a feeding frenzy among collectors, says Mike DiLeva, a spokesman for Harrah's Atlantic City, known for its serially numbered Valentine Day Chapel of Love chips. "We can't keep up with the demand."

And for good reason. Recently released $5 chips are bringing in $15 and $20 in the marketplace, says Glenn Lillie, vice president of marketing for the Claridge Casino Hotel, home to a series paying homage to legendary gamblers of the past.

"We think they're a unique tool, a warm and fuzzy kind of thing," Lillie says of the series, which features Doc Holliday, Bat Masterson, Poker Alice, and others.

A $5 Trump Taj Mahal Casino Resort chip honoring the matrimonial vows of Donald Trump and Marla Maples sells for $25 these days, and thanks to the divorce, will likely sell for even more in the future.

"People like collecting something with a value and a story attached to it," says Tom Cantone, Sands' vice president of studio and retail marketing.

Caesars takes credit for being the first casino in Atlantic City to jump on the commemorative bandwagon, back in 1992. The casino's latest issue commemorates the Andrew Golota-Lennox Lewis fight held at Boardwalk Convention Hall last month.

With few exceptions, most commemoratives are $5 chips. Factoring in the manufacturer's charge of about a buck, gaming halls walk away with a tidy surplus from each release. "It's a profit issue for the casinos," says Robert Ford, casino administrator for Tropicana.

Once the face value goes beyond $5, however, affordability drops for the collector, Ford adds. The Sands bucked the trend when it put out $20 Miss America chips—with a limited quantity of 500.

Some casinos order as many as 10,000 chips per commemorative, but most often, they stick to a figure of 2,500, says R.C. Coiro, of Paul-Son Gaming Supplies, a chip manufacturer.

The idea is not to flood the casino floor with a particular chip, says Audrey Oswell, executive vice president and general manager of Caesars. "Yet we want to keep some in circulation for later, so 2,500 makes for a nice number."

Adds Rachel Bogatin, vice president of casino operations at Hilton, "The less the supply, the greater the demand...."

Some collectors claim the casinos are too stingy on the numbers and/or too secretive about release dates. Of course, gaming halls say otherwise.

"There's only so many manufacturers, and collectors are well-organized," Ford says.

"Chip collectors have a good network," Bogatin adds.

Getting Started

**Casino Chip Show at Music Pier, Ocean City, November 1 and 2, Sat 9am-6 pm, Sun 9 am-4 pm. $3 a day or $5 for both days.*

**The Big Big Chip Auction. The Gaming Emporium, 301 Boardwalk (between Tropicana and Hilton). Call 1-800-354-3012 for bidding forms ($5 black and white, $20 color copy of all 264 large-denomination chips). Bidding closes January 31, 1998.*

**Casino Chips and Gaming Tokens Collectors Club, AC Chapter, c/o Archie Black, P.O. Box 63, Brick, NJ 08723—For $20 a year, you get the club's quarterly magazine and the opportunity to attend the annual convention in Las Vegas.*

FREE CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED-- Encased cents and other coins, engraved coins, pop-outs, scenic love tokens , hobo nickels, potty dollars, just about anything made from coins. Send for my offer or call me at 407-352-7807. Bob Slawsky, PO Box 864, Windermere, FL 34786

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SWASTIKA TOKENS..Paying $20.00 ($15.00 for NY orPA) each for any token or medal from NJ that has a swastika on it. ($40.00 for Whitehead&Hoag) Gary Patterson, R.R. 2 Box 154D, Peterborough, NH 03458-9322

DOG LICENSE TAGS If you don't read ***PAW PRINTS***, you don't know dog license tags. Complimentary copy on request. Bill Bone, Editor, 928 S.R. 2206, Clinton, KY 42031

OCEAN COUNTY Collecting and Researching all Ocean County obsolete and broken banknotes and merchant scrip. Want anything from Toms River 1850 to 1960, also notes issued in Bricksburg 1840's, Manchester 1840's....BUY-SELL-TRADE. Bob Mitchell, 629 Monmouth Way, Winter Park, FL 32792.

FREE LIST OF INEXPENSIVE TOKENS, MEDALS, etc.....Applied Statistics, Box 452, Oakhurst, NJ 07755

TRADE: 27 Different NJ Parking Tokens for Best MASS. token or encased offered. G. McLellan, 641 Waverly Street, Framingham, MA 01702

WANTED: ANYTHING RELATED TO WYCKOFF, NJ...THE MANHATTAN COMPANY(NY)...CHASE NATIONAL BANK(NY)..AND AARON BURR. All fiscal material, checks, obsoletes, nationals, postcards, stocks, bonds, paper, etc. Thomas Buda, PO BOX 315, Wyckoff, NJ 07481

NEW LARGE SWAP/SALE LIST....Transit, Video Arcade, Amusement, Carwash, Parking, State Trade, Centennial, and many Misc. types and tokens. My list for SASE or your list. Curtis H. Judge, 282 University Blvd.Harrisonburg, VA 22801

HARD ROCK CAFE PINS WANTED Will trade my Jersey Tokens&Medals and/or Playboy roulette chips for HARD ROCK... Archie Black, PO Box63, Brick, NJ 08723.

WANTED:ELONGATED COINS...Describe..Price...Write...Buy...Trade...Sell. Doug Fairbanks, Sr., 5937 Beadle Drive, Jamesville, NY 13078..PH315-469-4682.

WANTED: Tickets, Transfers, Photographs, and any other items related to streetcars or busses in Scranton, Pa.....Charles Wrobleski, 206 Green Street, Clarks Gren, PA 18411

NEW JERSEY AMUSEMENT TOKEN LISTING...76 page listing available for $7.00 postpaid from Bob Schopp, 16 Sanbert Circle, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

NEW JERSEY ITEMS FOR SALE: I've collected over 40 years and now am offering the following for sale...Tokens, Medals, Woods, Badges, Elongated Cents, and many other NJ items. Let me know what you want and send a SASE to Jerry Zara, 37 Everest Drive, Brick, NJ 08724

FOR SALE: Salem NJ 1870's to 1890's. Local news and many interesting ads and Railroad timetables. $8.00 each or 3 different for $20.00. All orders are postpaid. Steven Kawalec, PO BOX 4231, Clifton, NJ 07012

OCEAN COUNTY COIN CLUB EXONUMIA BOOKLET listing all the club exonumia ever issued will go to press in September and be available by January 1, 2000. Cost is $10.00 plus $4.00 handling. Deadline for requests is September 1st, 1999. Contact O.C.C.C. c/o 65 16th Street, Toms River, NJ 08753

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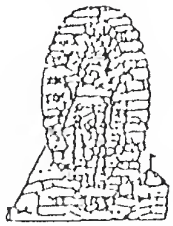

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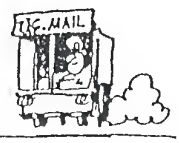

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